

Joel 2:23-27 – Principles of God’s Provisions

TSK, HebrewLexicon, Poole, Handfuls, Armstrong, Clarke, Geneva, JFB, Henry, Expositor, Eclectic, Calvin, Gill, Barnes, Trapp?

Brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ: You saw how much **God loved his people** that he showed them great and glorious days ahead beyond the dark clouds! Specifically: **God would punish the Babylonians for their enslavement of the Jews. He would provide the Jews with all provisions they needed in the future:** He would cause them to **return to Jerusalem, repair the temple, restore worship, and ready themselves for the spread of the Gospel** around the world.

Today you will see the **details of the provisions God would give to his people after their return from captivity.**

Our headings are:

Provisions that bring Pleasure

Provisions that bring Praise

Provisions that bring Proof

Our goals are: **That knowing God loves you even when you sin, you will learn to trust him in good times and in bad, and you will continue to work for him in good times and in bad.**

Provisions that bring Pleasure

23 Be glad then, you children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God;
For **He has given you the former rain** faithfully, And He will cause the rain to come down for you—The former rain, And **the latter rain in the first month.**

1. Joel commanded the people to be glad and to rejoice in the Lord for their coming freedom after captivity.

2. The Jews were to rejoice in the Lord –their covenant God; they were not to rejoice in their barns...or on their vines...or olives!

You will remember the **covenant relationship is only established when the person believes in Jesus’ sacrifice for sins.**

3. The Jews were to rejoice because God would bless them with the early and latter rains.

a. The early rains would be later in the year when the crops were planted, as in September/October.

b. The latter rains were given in March to ripen the grains in the spring.

c. It would have been useless to have 1 of the rains...as the crops them would not have survived, but God was giving complete blessings.

d. There is another interesting thing here: God would give the Jews the spring rains at the appropriate time, never late or early, which would have been deadly to the crops.

This was so important the Lord mentioned it many times.

Jeremiah 5:24 They do not say in their heart, "Let us now fear the LORD our God, Who gives rain, both the former and the latter, **in its season**. He reserves for us the appointed weeks of the harvest."

e. This rain was real for the crops, but they were used as symbolic of the coming down of the Word of God in showers!

Deuteronomy 32:2 Let my **teaching drop as the rain**, My speech **distill as the dew**, As **raindrops on the tender herb**, And as **showers on the grass**.

Isaiah 55:10 "**For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven**, And do not return there, But water the earth, And make it bring forth and bud, That it may give seed to the sower And bread to the eater, 11 **So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void**, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

And remember the significance: **God would pour out his Spirit** (as in a shower)...who would teach the people of God.

24 The threshing floors shall be **full of wheat**, And the **vats shall overflow** with new **wine and oil**.

4. The Jews were to rejoice because the early and latter rains would give them abundant food and drink.

a. Wheat was a harder grain that stored for longer, and was a crop that came in later in the year. This meant the Jews would have food for the winter months and enough to sell. On the contrary, look what God threatened and did before, when his people were rebelling against him.

Ezekiel 4:16 Moreover He said to me, "Son of man, surely I **will cut off the supply of bread** in Jerusalem; they shall eat bread by weight and with anxiety, and shall drink water by measure and with dread,

b. Wine was used as drink and for medicine, for joy and healing. Often fresh water was lacking in Jerusalem.

c. Olive oil was useful for cooking, eating, and for medicines.

25 "So **I will restore to you the years** that the swarming locust has eaten, The crawling locust, The consuming locust, And the chewing locust, **My great army** which I sent among you.

5. The Jews were to rejoice because God would so abundantly provide for them that even what the locusts destroyed, he would restore to them.

The land had looked hopeless, and it was, but God was gracious. God didn't have to restore the Jews, but he did!

6. Lessons:

a. You have to be in and remain in God to receive his rich blessings. Apart from God is death.

b. So don't rejoice in your Rav4; rejoice in your Redeemer. He is the source of your blessings.

Philippians 3:3 For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, **rejoice in Christ** Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, 4 **Rejoice in the Lord always.** Again, I will say, rejoice!

c. The Lord Jesus is the source of you early and latter rains! He brings showers of blessings, not just to the land, but to your hard hearts, so the Gospel that was sown in your hearts will bear good fruits – fruits of repentance!

Hosea 6:3 Let us know, Let us pursue the knowledge of the LORD. His going forth is established as the morning; **He will come to us like the rain, Like the latter and former rain to the earth.**

Psalms 72:6 **He shall come down like rain upon the grass before mowing,** Like showers that water the earth.

The **word for rain is teacher.** Learn the lessons!

John 3:2 This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, **we know that You are a teacher come from God;** for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."

d. God is the one who controls all things: earthquakes, famines, drought, or Covid-19. You name it, he controls it. He uses whatever he has. And his armies could be the weak, sickly locusts, or the might strong army of Babylon! It could be Prime Minister Trudeau or the garbage collector.

Provisions that lead to Praise

26 You shall **eat in plenty and be satisfied,** And **praise the name of the LORD your God,** Who has dealt **wondrously** with you; And My people **shall never be put to shame.**

1. Joel called on the Jews to praise the name of the Lord for how he would restore them and for all he would give to them.

a. God's provision would shut the boasting mouths of the Jews who had earlier trusted in the land and their own strength. They had to realize God was the source of their

blessings.

Deuteronomy 8:10 "When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land which He has given you.

b. The Jews praising God would then shut the mouth of God's enemies. They would see what God had done and they would hear what God's people were saying. What more could they say? Obviously, **the Jews could not praise God if they were not in a good relationship with God,** but they would be restored! The repented of their sins through the coming Savior! What a wondrous thing. Who can deny this act was wondrous? **And doesn't this point to the cross of Jesus?** What wondrous love!

"What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul, what wondrous love is this, O my soul! What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss to bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul, to bear the dreadful curse for my soul!"

c. What God gave to the Jews removed their shame. They would not be starving beggars of bread anymore.

This would prove their God was the true God and prove that the heathen gods were nothing.

2. Lessons:

a. What a wonderful relationship you can have with Almighty God! What close fellowship! What wondrous things God has done for you! All your shame he has removed! Your name is written the Lamb's Book of Life! He continues to feed you today by his Word and the Holy Supper.

b. Surely you can be filled with adoration and praise! You can shout without shame: "Hallelujah!"

Psalms 22:26 The poor shall eat and be satisfied; Those who seek Him will praise the LORD. Let your heart live forever!

c. You should make the introduction of others to this God Almighty!

d. And what about your creature comforts...you phone...your car...your food...do you give God thanks for them? Do you children thank God for your games...and your hotdog...or do you complain?

e. When you are ashamed of your sins, you won't have to be ashamed of the future!

Provisions that lead to Proof

27 Then you shall know that **I am in the midst of Israel:** I am the LORD your God And **there is no other.** My people shall **never be put to shame.**

1. God would not only provide bread and wine that would lead to joy and ultimately to praise

a. God would give proof he was Yahweh

b. God would give proof of his power!

Deuteronomy 32:39 'Now see that I, even I, am He, And **there is no God besides Me**; I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; Nor is there any who can deliver from My hand.

c. God would provide proof he was with Judah, in Judah.

2. This proof of God's power and presence would guarantee his people would not be put to shame.

Why did God give details of future captivity and future restoration of his rich blessings so long before it actually happened? He did this so the Jews would know all the events in history were guided by God. More, they would know that because these things came from him, they could not take the credit for what he did!

3. Lessons:

a. Jesus did come and live in the midst of man whom he redeemed and then poured (rained) his Holy Spirit on them, not only in their midst, but also in their hearts. This was proof beyond doubt.

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and **we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.**

More, God's Spirit bears witness with our spirits that we are children of God.

b. And he will never, ever leave us.

Matthew 28:20 "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

Ezekiel 37:26 "Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them, and it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; I will establish them and multiply them, and I will set My sanctuary in their midst forevermore. 27 "My tabernacle also shall be with them; indeed I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 28 "The nations also will know that I, the LORD, sanctify Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst forevermore.""

c. The more you know about God (and learn), the more you will have proof of him!

This is the big story here. It is not about the Jews and how blessed they were. It is about God and how bountiful he was!

Conclusion:

God would bring pleasure to the Jews after they had suffered in Babylon for 70 years. That blessing would cause the Jews to praise their generous God. Finally, they and the nations around

would acknowledge that Yahweh was the only true God of heaven and earth!

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. Reflect on your salvation. Yes, it is good to reflect on **God's provision of food, clothing, and security,** but there is much more. You have to see how **the Lord showered you with the rains from your teacher, Jesus Christ.** He then **died for you.** He **gave you faith** so you could receive what he did. **He then sent you his Holy Spirit** and gave you his completed Word to keep nourishing you. He will come again **to take you to be with him.**

2. Respond in worship.

3. Repeat this message to the world. Let the world know Yahweh is the only true God and Jesus is the only way of salvation.

Finally, **if you want to be a Christian and enjoy all the blessings from God, acknowledge you are a sinner without hope, but that Jesus Christ took your place on the cross.**